

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 SP-02 INR-05

SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 IO-03 ACDA-05 PM-03 SAJ-01

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R 021310Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6843

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 03416

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PL, GW

SUBJECT: CONVERSATIONS WITH CDU PARTY CHAIRMAN KOHL
AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT ON THE MARGIN OF
SOCIAL EVENTS

1. ALTHOUGH THE SETTING WAS SCARCELY PROPITIOUS FOR
WHAT THE GERMANS LIKE TO CALL "SERIOUS POLITICAL TALKS,"
CDU PARTY CHAIRMAN AND CHANCELLOR-CANDIDATE HELMUT KOHL
USED THE OCCASION OF THE ROSE MONDAY CARNIVAL PARADE IN
MAINZ, WHICH I VIEWED AS HIS GUEST FROM THE BALCONY OF
THE RHEINLAND-PFALZ JUSTICE MINISTRY, TO MAKE TWO POINTS
WORTH RECORDING: (A) THE MARCH 12 VOTE IN THE BUNDES-
RAT ON THE POLISH AGREEMENT IS STILL UNCERTAIN. EVERY-
THING WILL DEPEND ON THE KIND OF STATEMENT THAT THE
POLISH GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO MAKE ON THE ONLY REALLY
IMPORTANT POINT TO THE CDU, NAMELY THE POSSIBILITY THAT
EVERY ETHNIC GERMAN WHO WANTS TO LEAVE POLAND WILL BE
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PERMITTED TO DO SO. WITH THE SITUATION WHAT IT IS IN

THE SAARLAND, KOHL SAID HE HAD GIVEN MINISTER-PRESIDENT ROEDER A FREE HAND ON THIS ISSUE, BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE ASSUMED THAT THE NEW MINISTER-PRESIDENT ALBRECHT, OF NIEDERSACHSEN, WAS IN A SIMILAR POSITION. KOHL EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS TAKING SIDES ON THIS QUESTION DURING AN ELECTION YEAR IN THE FRG. I NOTED THAT OUR POSITION HAD BEEN FULLY EXPLAINED TO HIM AT EICHOLZ ON FEBRUARY 20 BY COUNSELOR SONNENFELDT, AND OUR ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION REMAINED THE SAME.

(B) KOHL WAS ALMOST EUPHORIC ABOUT HIS ELECTION PROSPECTS, STRESSING THE CONTINUING UPWARD PROGRESSION OF THE CDU/CSU IN THE POLLS, THE LATEST OF WHICH SHOWED HIS SUPPORTERS WITH 52 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL VOTE, WITH 36 PERCENT FOR THE SPD AND 9 PERCENT FOR THE FDP. HE ADDED THAT, IF HE COULD SEND TEN CDU AND CSU LEADERS, WHO WOULD REMAIN UNNAMED, AWAY TO A LUXURY HOTEL IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS AND KEEP THEM THERE IN SILENCE UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS, VICTORY WOULD BE ASSURED.

2. TO BALANCE THIS OFF, I SHOULD NOTE THAT, ON FEBRUARY 27, THE CHANCELLOR AND I WERE GUESTS OF HONOR AT THE ANNUAL MATTHIAE-MAHLZEIT (BANQUET) GIVEN IN HAMBURG BY THE SENATE OF THAT CITY. AGAIN, THE OCCASION WAS NOT PROPITIOUS FOR EXTENDED PRIVATE CONVERSATION, BUT IN AN EXCHANGE OVER COFFEE, THE CHANCELLOR DEMONSTRATED THAT HE IS IN ONE OF HIS DEEPLY TROUBLED MOODS ABOUT THE U.S. HE WAS INTERESTED IN OUR PRIMARY ELECTION PROCESS, ABOUT WHICH HE WAS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR. THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF THE CIA HEARINGS AND RELATED LEAKS, LEAKS OF THE COMPTROLLER'S LIST OF PROBLEM BANKS, ANGOLA DEVELOPMENTS, THE CONTINUING PUBLICIZED PLIGHT OF NEW YORK CITY, THE LOCKHEED SCANDALS, AND

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 03416

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THE PROSPECT OF A PROTRACTED ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, HAVE
RAISED SERIOUS QUESTIONS IN HIS MIND ABOUT THE FUNCTIONING
OF OUR SYSTEM. I TRIED TO REASSURE HIM THAT THE
STRENGTHS OF THE U.S. WERE FAR GREATER THAN MANY EURO-
PEANS SEEMED TO APPRECIATE, AND THAT WE COULD STILL BE
COUNTED UPON TO PLAY THE LEADERSHIP ROLE WHICH OUR
POWER AND WEALTH MADE MANDATORY. HE WILL, I FEAR,
NEED CONTINUING PERSUASION.

3. COMMENT: KOHL'S INFORMATION ABOUT THE SITUATION IN
NIEDERSACHSEN DOES NOT ENTIRELY JIBE WITH THAT GIVEN
TO CONSUL GENERAL BROGAN BY CDU LEADERS IN HANNOVER
(HAMBURG 0265). IT MAY BE THAT KOHL IS NOT FULLY
INFORMED ABOUT ALBRECHT'S AND HASSELMANN'S INTENTIONS.
AT THE CLIMAX OF THE CARNIVAL SEASON, THE MINISTER-
PRESIDENT OF RHEINLAND-PFALZ IS LIKELY TO BE CONSIDER-
ABLY DISTRACTED FROM THE EXIGENCIES OF POLITICAL LIFE.

AN INTERESTING FACT WHICH HAS JUST COME TO MY
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ATTENTION IS THAT NOT ONLY DO BOTH THE CANDIDATES FOR
THE CHANCELLORSHIP IN THE ELECTIONS BEAR THE NAME OF
HELMUT, BUT BOTH THEIR WIVES HAVE THE NAME OF HANNELORE.
I LEAVE IT TO THOSE EXPERT IN THE CALCULUS OF PROBABI-
LITY TO FIGURE OUT THE ODDS AGAINST THIS HAPPENING.
HILLENBRAND

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